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**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

## SUCCESS STORY

# School Saves Money on Heating

### USAID demonstrates ways to manage school budgets in Kyrgyzstan



Ms. Raisa Kasalapova, the Principal of school № 12 in Tokmok, would like to use the saved money on school supplies.

Photo: USAID Quality Learning Project

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- Principal of school № 12 in Tokmok, Ms. Raisa Kasalapova

Kyrgyz schools have very little autonomy to plan their own expenditure. Ministries of Education and Finance provide the schools with a set budget for utilities, salaries, and miscellaneous expenses, and the schools don't have any incentives to try and prioritize their spending needs. To demonstrate a more efficient approach to the management of school finances, USAID carried out a pilot project in the city of Tokmok 60 kilometers from the country's capital Bishkek. After identifying the utility expenses as having the most potential for savings, USAID collaborated with the Tokmok mayor's office to install energy saving measures in three schools.

The USAID's Quality Learning project installed heating meters in these schools, so that they can track their heating consumption. Additionally, the project installed valves to regulate the temperature on the premises. “Our heating bills used to be enormous, yet we did not feel that school was getting enough heating,” says Principal of school № 12 in Tokmok, Ms. Raisa Kasalapova. “Now we pay for the actual amount of heating we receive and are able to regulate the temperature levels at school.” The schools can decrease the supply of heat during the school winter vacation or increase it during the colder days.

Even though last winter was unusually cold for the country and energy costs were had increased, the new devices resulted in a significant reduction in the school's spending on heating. “Because we were able to track our energy consumption using the heating meter, the school was able to save more than 400,000 som (approximately \$11,300) of budgeted funds during the last heating season,” says Ms. Kasalapova. This amount fully covered the cost of the meter and its installation – approximately 120,000 som (\$3,400). “If the school could keep the saved funds in its budget, it would be a substantial support,” says the principal.

The USAID Quality Learning project continues to monitor the savings generated at the three schools and is advocating with the Ministries of Education and Finance to allow the schools to keep the saved money. Such approach not only would encourage schools to find ways to lower their operating costs, but use savings to improve student learning environment.